



Judd Gregg, Ranking Member
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Senator Gregg: We Need Accurate Fiscal Picture Before Voting on Health Care Reform

Senator Judd Gregg, ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, made the following statement in reaction to news that the White House Office of Management and Budget will delay issuing its mid-year budget outlook until after Congress has left Washington for the August recess period:

“The law states that the President shall submit a supplemental summary of his February budget before July 16 of each year. We are hearing that the White House is delaying the mid-session budget review, which will show updated projections of the deficit, economic growth, inflation, and unemployment, until mid-August. Meanwhile, the White House and the Democratic leadership in Congress are pushing for passage of health care reform legislation in the next several weeks.

“A major overhaul of our nation’s health care system – while needed – is not something that should be rushed for political reasons. The plans put forth by the Democratic majority will have a tremendous impact on our long-term fiscal situation, so it only makes sense that Congress and the American people have the most current information about the nation’s budget outlook before making such monumental decisions about further increasing federal spending on health care. Asking Congress to evaluate a policy proposal as large as health reform without having a full and accurate picture of our current fiscal situation is incredibly irresponsible.

“Taking the time to gather all the facts is critical, especially now that the federal deficit has passed the \$1 trillion mark for the first time in history. Just last week, the Congressional Budget Office Director confirmed that the majority’s health care reform plans will increase federal spending on health care and worsen our already bleak long-term fiscal picture. CBO Director Elmendorf delivered the bad news that while the nation’s debt continues to rise to unsustainable levels, there is little in these reform plans that will do anything but make it worse.

“Instead of delaying the release of important fiscal information and rushing to vote on new, trillion-dollar spending plans, I think we need to slow down and take into account the nation’s fiscal health before deciding what is best for the American taxpayers.”